

*Members to soon introduce energy independence and job creation bill*

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Tim Walz today announced the formation of the House Energy Working Group, a bipartisan group that will introduce a clean-energy independence plan that creates a new energy infrastructure and rebuilds our country's aging roads, bridges, locks and dams. The group will be led by Reps. Tim Murphy (R-PA), Tim Walz (D-MN), Jim Costa (D-CA), Bill Shuster (R-PA). Last session, the legislators introduced HR 2227, the American Conservation and Clean Energy Independence Act.

"I am proud to be part of this bi-partisan coalition of lawmakers. I believe putting aside partisan bickering and finding common-sense solutions will speed up America's transition to an energy independent future," said **Walz**. "Continuing to send our money overseas to countries that don't like us doesn't make any sense. We can tap into the American can-do spirit and work together to find better, more affordable ways to power our homes, workplaces and schools."

As gas prices continue to rise, experts warn that gas prices could soon reach five dollars a gallon. OPEC stands to reap over \$840 billion in revenue this year, much of it from the United States, which imports nearly 60% of its oil. Meanwhile, after forty years of talking about energy independence, America has yet to implement a long term, national energy strategy.

Energy independence is vital for national security, as reduced reliance on foreign oil and gas increases stability here at home. The House Energy Working Group has pledged to leave politics at the door and focus on comprehensive and common-sense solutions. The group announced the first step in that process will be the reintroduction of the American Conservation and Clean Energy Independence Act, a bipartisan bill that received 40 cosponsors in the last Congress.

The legislation puts America directly on the path to energy independence by encouraging the development of our own resources. The Group will introduce legislation dedicating an estimated \$2.2 to \$3.7 trillion in royalty and lease payments from offshore energy production for investments in alternative energy and energy efficiency, lower emissions at power plants, clean water and rebuilding America's infrastructure. The bill also extends tax incentives for clean energy production and conservation to foster new, long-term investments in clean energy technology.

"Our bipartisan working group is singularly focused on accomplishing the goal of energy independence. As both Democrats and Republicans, we've set aside politics to develop legislation that will grow jobs and boost our economy," said **Murphy**. "Today, the President announced his goal of reducing oil imports by one-third over the next ten years, a goal we will be working on in our bipartisan energy group to achieve. There's no reason to continue importing oil from unstable and unfriendly regimes abroad when we can use our own vast natural resources in a safe and responsible way to take back our energy destiny."

"America has vast reserves of domestic energy that can harness our transition to a new energy economy that will lead us closer to independence from our dangerous reliance on foreign oil," said **Shuster**. "I am pleased to cosponsor this common-sense and important legislation with my colleagues. It is past time that we invest in domestic energy to create American jobs and power our nation with American energy."

"The bipartisan House Energy Working Group is a solid first step toward securing America's energy independence," said **Costa**. "With gas prices skyrocketing and turmoil in the Middle East, it is clear we can no longer afford to keep pumping our dollars to unstable regions of the world. We've got to develop our energy right here in America using every tool in our energy toolbox. It's time to put aside our political labels and get to work for the good of the country."